

ClaimsWhat is claimed is:

1 1. In a computer controlled user interactive display
2 system, a display interface implementation for directing
3 a user's attention to specific selectable items on a
4 display screen with crowded selectable items comprising;
5 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
6 pointer to approach said selectable items; and
7 means for highlighting all items in any set of a
8 plurality of said items wherein each item in the set is
9 within a predetermined distance of said approaching
10 pointer.

1 2. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 1 wherein said selectable items are
3 icons.

1 3. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 2 further including means for ending said
3 highlighting of each of said highlighted icons when the
4 pointer moves outside of said predetermined distance
5 for said icon.

1 4. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 2 further including means for ending said
3 highlighting of each of said highlighted icons after a
4 predetermined period of time.

1 5. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 2 wherein said means for highlighting
3 sequentially highlight each icon in said set.

1 6. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 2:

3 wherein said means for sequentially highlighting
4 said set of icons highlight each icon in the set for a
5 defined period of time; and

6 further including means for enabling the user
7 selection of each sequentially highlighted item during
8 said period of time.

1 7. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 6 wherein the icons in said set overlap
3 each other.

1 8. A method for directing a user's attention to specific
2 selectable items on a display screen with crowded
3 selectable items in computer controlled user interactive
4 display systems comprising:

5 moving an on-screen pointer to approach said
6 selectable items; and

7 highlighting all items in any set of a plurality of
8 said items wherein each item in the set is within a
9 predetermined distance of said approaching pointer.

1 9. The method of claim 8 wherein said selectable items
2 are icons.

1 10. The method of claim 9 further including the step of
2 ending said highlighting of each of said highlighted
3 icons when the pointer is moved outside of said
4 predetermined distance for said icon.

1 11. The method of claim 9 further including the step of
2 ending said highlighting of each of said highlighted
3 icons after a predetermined period of time.

1 12. The method of claim 9 wherein said step of
2 highlighting sequentially highlights each item in said
3 set.

1 13. The method of claim 9 wherein said step of
2 sequentially highlighting said set of icons highlight
3 each icon in the set for a defined period of time; and
4 further including the step of enabling the user
5 selection of each sequentially highlighted item during
6 said period of time.

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1 14. The method of claim 13 wherein the icons in said set
2 overlap each other.

1 15. A computer program having program code included on a
2 computer readable medium for directing a user's attention
3 to specific selectable items on a display screen with
4 crowded selectable items in computer controlled user
5 interactive display systems comprising:

6 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
7 pointer to approach said selectable items; and

means for highlighting all items in any set of a plurality of said items wherein each item in the set is within a predetermined distance of said approaching pointer.

1 16. The computer program of claim 15 wherein said
2 selectable items are icons.

1 17. The computer program of claim 16 further including
2 means for ending said highlighting of each of said
3 highlighted icons when the pointer moves outside of said
4 predetermined distance for said icon.

1 18. The computer program of claim 16 further including
2 means for ending said highlighting of each of said
3 highlighted icons after a predetermined period of time.

1 19. The computer program of claim 16 wherein said means
2 for highlighting sequentially highlights each icon in
3 said set.

- 1 20. The computer program of claim 16 wherein said means
- 2 for sequentially highlighting said set of icons highlight
- 3 each icon in the set for a defined period of time; and
- 4 further including means enabling the user selection
- 5 of each sequentially highlighted item during said period
- 6 of time.

- 1 21. The computer program of claim 20 wherein the icons
- 2 in said set overlap each other.

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1 22. In a computer controlled user interactive display
2 system, a display interface implementation for directing
3 a user's attention to specific selectable items on a
4 display screen with crowded selectable items comprising;
5 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
6 pointer to approach a cluster of said selectable items;
7 and
8 means for sequentially highlighting each item in
9 said cluster when said approaching pointer is within a
10 predetermined distance from said cluster.

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1 23. In a computer controlled user interactive display
2 system, a display interface implementation for directing
3 a user's attention to specific selectable items on a
4 display screen with crowded selectable items comprising:
5 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
6 pointer to approach a cluster of said selectable items;
7 means for determining whether the items in said
8 cluster have sufficient separation for said pointer to
9 select separate items in said cluster; and
10 means responsive to said determining means for
11 sequentially highlighting each item in said cluster when
12 there is insufficient separation.

1 24. The computer controlled user interactive display
2 system of claim 23 wherein each item is activated for
3 selection when highlighted.

1 25. A method for directing a user's attention to
2 specific selectable items on a display screen with
3 crowded selectable items in computer controlled user
4 interactive display systems comprising:
5 moving an on-screen pointer to approach a cluster of
6 said selectable items; and
7 sequentially highlighting each item in said cluster
8 when said approaching pointer is within a predetermined
9 distance from said cluster.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

1 26. A method for directing a user's attention to
2 specific selectable items on a display screen with
3 crowded selectable items in computer controlled user
4 interactive display systems comprising:
5 moving an on-screen pointer to approach a cluster of
6 said selectable items;
7 determining whether the items in said cluster have
8 sufficient separation for said pointer to select separate
9 items in said cluster; and
10 sequentially highlighting each item in said cluster
11 responsive to a determination that there is insufficient
12 separation.

1 27. The method of claim 26 wherein each item is
2 activated for selection when highlighted.

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1 28. A computer program having program code included on a
2 computer readable medium for directing a user's attention
3 to specific selectable items on a display screen with
4 crowded selectable items in computer controlled user
5 interactive display systems comprising:

6 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
7 pointer to approach a cluster of said selectable items;
8 and

9 means for sequentially highlighting each item in
10 said cluster when said approaching pointer is within a
11 predetermined distance from said cluster.

1 29. A computer program having program code included on a
2 computer readable medium for directing a user's attention
3 to specific selectable items on a display screen with
4 crowded selectable items in computer controlled user
5 interactive display systems comprising:

6 user controlled means for moving an on-screen
7 pointer to approach a cluster of said selectable items;

means for determining whether the items in said cluster have sufficient separation for said pointer to select separate items in said cluster; and

means responsive to said determining means for sequentially highlighting each item in said cluster when there is insufficient separation.

1 30. The computer program of claim 29 wherein each item
2 is activated for selection when highlighted.

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